Approved by Grower and Civic Organizations

The San Jose Chamber of Commerce Committee on Water has made a careful study of this Coyote Dam No. 2, with its plan to put the waste waters of the Coyote to use. Through its chairman, Mr. Fred Oehler, it has announced its unanimous and unqualified approval.

The project is enthusiastically endorsed by grower organizations such as the Farm Bureaus, and Granges. It likewise has the support of the Central Labor Council, the Building Trades Council, Veterans groups, Educational bodies, and numerous other civic organizations.

We All Depend on Water

It should never be assumed by the merchant, professional man or city dweller that the problem of water is one which concerns only the orchardist or the industrialist. It is vital to every man and woman in northern Santa Clara Valley who here makes his home, owns property, or draws his income from this area.

Our fruit industries alone bring in $50,000,000 a year. We are the center of the world's dried fruit and canning industry. We have in addition a vegetable and dairy business that bring in an additional $30,000,000. We have made a start towards a healthy and stable economic balance by attracting numerus industrial plants. This growth gives employment to labor in all its varied branches. It sustains our cities, it supports our merchants and professions. We all depend on it for our daily living. It, in turn, depends upon water.

For this reason your Board of Directors of your Water Conservation District give their unanimous and unqualified endorsement to these bonds, and urge their support by the voters of the District at the election on June 14.

Dated: June 1, 1949.

DIRECTORS:

S. D. Farrington, Div. 1
J. E. Wiesendanger, Div. 2
C. G. Spargur, Div. 3
L. O. Wilcox, Div. 4
Harry G. Mitchell, Div. 5
Reginald L. Parry, Div. 6
S. W. Pfeifle, Div. 7

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

on

COYOTE DAM No. 2

●

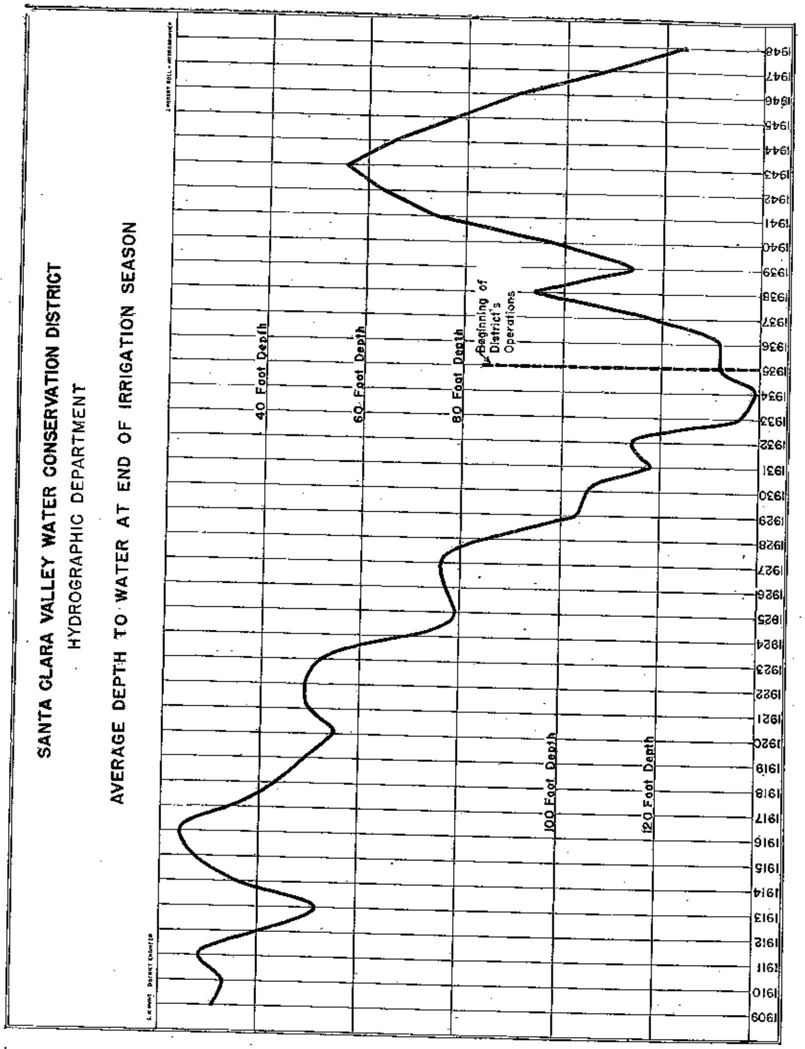
by

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

of

SANTA CLARA VALLEY

WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



OFFICIAL STATEMENT
on
COYOTE DAM
No. 2
by
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
of
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

TO THE VOTERS OF THE DISTRICT:

No community can be greater than its water supply.

Santa Clara Valley is faced with the problem of a sudden and ever-increasing growth in population, while at the same time it is one of the semi-arid valleys of the State.

Because of this ever-increasing use, we have overdrawn our "water bank"; we have been taking more out of our underground water storage than has been going into it.

Everyone Stands to Lose

Everyone suffers from a low water level. When the cost of water becomes excessive, the profit is taken out of fruit raising. Likewise, when the farmer cannot show he has access to sufficient water, he will be denied loans. He is not able to sell his land.

Industries which require a dependable supply of water will not locate here.

Wage-earners are affected unless there be increasing opportunities for employment. Merchants and professional men all depend upon the prosperity of the Valley and the payrolls from agriculture and industry.

There is no one who escapes the results of an insufficient water supply.

Election Called to Avert Threat

Fortunately, we still have one remaining source of water, only a portion of which we now save, namely, the run-off from the vast Coyote watershed.

An election has been called for Tuesday, June 14, 1949, to enable the District to meet the problem of increasing the water supply. At this election the voters of the Water District will determine whether to authorize a $3,000,000 bond issue to build a dam on the Lower Coyote River.

Need for Additional Water

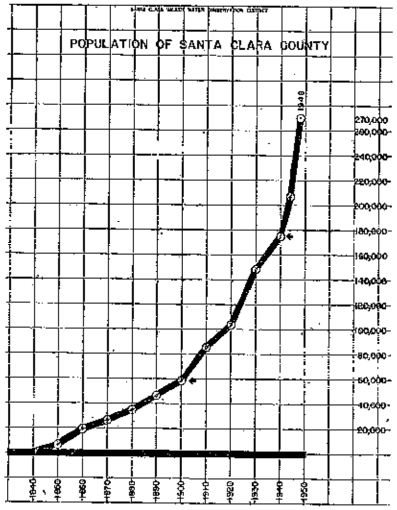
The Lexington Dam on the Los Gatos Creek was recently authorized by the voters of the District to help meet the desperate situation. This Dam will be commenced just as soon as the State Highway Department re-routes Santa Cruz highway traffic around the dam site, to comply with the recently adopted State law.

The waters stored by the Lexington project should be sufficient to take care of the present annual over-draft of approximately 25,000 acre feet, but, as was pointed out in the Engineer's report on the Lexington Project, these waters of the Los Gatos will only be sufficient to meet the present overdraft and keep the water level from going lower, but will not be sufficient to build it up nor take care of the additional requirements of the future.

We must plan to increase our water storage, and bring the water level up to where it stood some years ago, so that in a succession of dry years we will have an adequate supply to draw from. To do this it is necessary to have a source of water in addition to the Lexington supply.

Increase of Population

Our water problem would be simple if population remained the same. However, our population in this Valley is growing amazingly. This is revealed by the chart below. This chart shows that during the 50 years from 1850 to 1900 by gradual growth the total population of the County had reached 60,000. Compare that with what happened during the eight years between 1940 and 1948. In that brief time our population increased by 95,000, bringing the County's total population to 272,000.



The above chart shows the accelerated increase in Santa Clara County population in recent years.

This increase in population has meant an enormous increase in water requirements — domestic, industrial and agricultural. The domestic use has increased greatly. In 1944 the San Jose Water Works made 300 new connections. In 1948 they made 3831 new connections.

This new population has brought, and has followed, new industries to our Valley.

Agriculture also needs more water because of more intensive farming, and because of the extensive row crop production which requires more water than orchard land.

Results of Falling Water Level

Three distinct conditions follow when the water level is too low. All three have already happened in parts of the Valley: (1) wells run dry and must be deepened or abandoned; (2) the cost of lowering pumps, increasing power units and pumping the remaining wells becomes too heavy; (3) salt water seepage from San Francisco Bay ruins wells in the low lands.

The graph on Page 2 shows the alarming fall in the underground water table in the 20-year period from 1915 to 1935 due to overdraft. It also shows the recovery in the water level because of the District's operations in the eight-year period from 1935 to 1943. The saving of water by the District made many wells flow again. Now, however, increased pumping and a number of years of under-normal rainfall have again lowered the underground water level.

Requirements of New Supply

We must not only have more water, but it must be cheap. To have cheap water, it must be local water, and it must flow down hill. Also, it must be abundant. Major storage is necessary for cheap water. The larger the storage, the cheaper the water per acre foot. This new source must also use and save the enormous investment in the Valley's wells and pumping systems.

The last major local supply available to this Valley is the Lower Coyote River.

Abundant New Source

Government records extending back nearly 50 years show that the runoff from the Coyote River has averaged over 58,000 acre feet annually, including extended dry periods. This runoff has often exceeded 100,000 acre feet, frequently has exceeded 125,000 acre feet, and at times has even amounted to more than 200,000 acre feet.

Some five miles below the existing Coyote Dam is the junction of the main channel of the Coyote River with the North Fork (variously known as the Las Animas, San Felipe or Packwood Creeks). This Coyote Dam No. 2 will be located just below this junction so as to catch the waters of the North Fork and all such water of the main channel as the existing Coyote Dam is unable to retain.

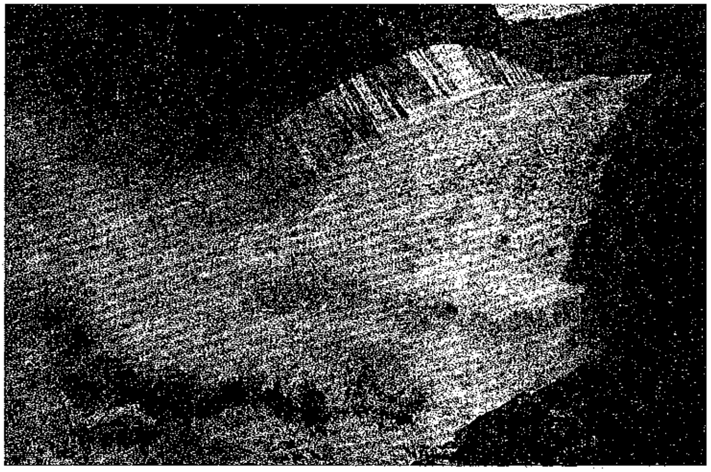
The District's present, or Upper Coyote, reservoir, has a capacity of about 25,000 acre feet. In no year, except dry years, is this present reservoir able to hold the flow of the main channel. It catches none of the North Fork water.

Carry-over for Dry Years

The District's Engineer, therefore, reports that there is ample runoff to justify a large dam, and recommends a capacity of 75,000 acre feet. This storage, added to that of the Upper Coyote, would make 100,000 acre feet. Much of this amount of 100,000 acre feet, stored in wet years, could be carried over so as to provide water for succeeding dry years.

The picture, on Page 6, of the Upper Coyote spillway vividly shows the need of a second dam. In this picture the present Coyote reservoir is completely filled, and water $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep is pouring over the spillway, at the rate of 5,000 acre feet a day. This water would all be caught by a second Coyote Dam.

The District Engineer's report further discloses that, if this Coyote Dam No. 2, with a capacity of 75,000 acre feet, had been in existence on January 1, 1937, sufficient water for normal percolation would have been available through 1949, in spite of four dry years during this twelve-year period.



This picture, taken February 29, 1940, shows water 4½ feet deep wasting over the spillway of Coyote Dam No. 1, at the rate of 5,000 acre feet a day. This water would be saved by Coyote Dam No. 2.

Stabilizing Water Level

Water is "where you find it." It is equally true that water is "when you find it." Thus the water of wet years must be impounded to carry it over for use in dry years. If this second dam were designed merely to impound the runoff of the average year it would be inadequate to catch all the water available in wet years. It has therefore been designed to impound and hold the water of wet years for release during dry years. In this way this second Coyote reservoir can be of maximum usefulness.

Water Level Can Be Restored

This second dam on the Coyote, in conjunction with the Lexington Dam on the Los Gatos, will operate to restore the water plane and to level out the fluctuation between wet and dry periods. A glance at the graph on Page 2 will show the success already achieved by the District when, during the eight-year period from 1935 to 1943, its five existing dams, with a capacity of approximately 45,000 acre feet, brought the water level up 80 feet.

Our population growth, along with the intensive irrigation of enlarged agricultural areas and the requirements of new industries, have, however, resulted in such an over-draft of our underground supply that the District's five earlier reservoirs are no longer adequate. Even with the additional water to be provided by the Lexington Dam, it will require saving all the water now wasted from the Coyote, to build back the underground water level. Since 1943 the water level in this Valley has dropped over 60 feet. The effects have been disastrous. For example, a well which once delivered 1100 gallons of water a minute now produces only 150 gallons a minute, and many pumps can no longer reach the lowered water level.

Dam Site Approved

The point on the Coyote River, known as the Upper Gorge, selected as the location for Coyote Dam No. 2, provides an ideal site for a dam. It is by all odds the finest reservoir site in Santa Clara County. A large dam and reservoir at this site was recommended years ago by Fred H. Tibbetts, the Engineer for the Water District at the time of its inception. However, because his proposal to build the dam was made in the very depths of the depression of the 1930's and before the recent unanticipated growth of our population, the voters of the District did not feel that economic conditions then justified the outlay for such a large dam. Accordingly, Mr. Tibbetts substituted the present smaller Coyote Dam. However, the present-day increased demand for water has more than justified Mr. Tibbett's original recommendation.

On April 6, 1949, Messrs. Chester and Bert Marliave, consulting geologists, inspected this site. They reported that it is admirably adapted to the construction of a dam of the type recommended by Mr. G. W. Hunt, Chief Engineer of the Water District.

Recreation and Fishing

The Coyote Dam No. 2 would form a lake approximately 6 miles long. Owing to its size and the enormous volume of water which it will store, it should be popular for picnicking, boating and recreation. Also, the Fish & Game Commission plans to stock it with fish. For this reason the project has the backing of sportsmen's organizations.

Low Interest Rates

The proposed bonds to finance the construction are to be payable over a period of 25 years. The District should be able to sell these bonds at an extremely low rate of interest for two reasons: (1) on account of the financial strength of the District, the bonds should be an attractive investment; and (2) rates of interest on such obligations are at present at nearly an all-time low.

Improvements Not Assessed

The annual tax for paying off the bonds is based on land only, not improvements. The assessed valuation of lands within the District is $57,529.505. To retire 1/25 of the bonds each year, with interest not exceeding 2½%, the first year's taxes would amount to approximately 34c on each $100 of assessed valuation of lands only. Your house, improvements and buildings are not taxed. For example, if the average home is assessed for $2400, of which the assessed valuation on the land is $400, and the improvements $2000, the Water District tax is computed only on the $400 portion. The first year's taxes for such an amount would be $1.36. This amount would reduce annually with the paying off of 1/25 of the principal each year.

It has been pointed out by many property owners in the District that this tax in reality is an insurance against depreciation of property values. Unless the Valley has sufficient water, its property values will decline. The conserving of the waters of the Coyote is the best guarantee against such depreciation of land values.